

Initially, Claim 8 to 24 have been canceled herein pursuant to the prior restriction and election/response.

The rejection of the claims over the cited art respectfully is traversed.

Nevertheless, without conceding the propriety of the rejection, Claims 1 to 7 have been amended herein more clearly to recite various novel features of the present invention, with particular attention to the Examiner's comments. Support for the proposed amendments may be found in the original application. No new matter has been added.

The present invention relates to a novel camera and method for image pick up by a camera. In one aspect, as now recited in independent Claim 1, the camera comprises a plurality of image pick up means for picking up a plurality of images of an object, respectively, display means for displaying images picked up by the plurality of image pick up means, and a plurality of memory means for use both as a display buffer for displaying the images picked up by the plurality of image pick up means, and as a recording buffer for recording the images picked up by the plurality of image pick up means.

Applicants submit that the prior art fails to anticipate the present invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that there are differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art, such that the subject matter taken as a whole would not have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art.

The Forslund '338 patent relates to an apparatus and method for raster generation from sparse area array output, and discloses a camera image data processor that provides scan conversion at extremely high speed while allowing static and dynamic correction of image data particularly for a high data output rate CCD image transducer in a

confocal imaging system for automated optical inspection in manufacturing processes. However, Applicants submit that the Forslund '338 patent fails to disclose or suggest at least the above described features of the present invention. Rather, the Forslund '338 patent discloses a confocal optical depth measurement system (10), which detects a change in of a luminance level of each pixel of an image pick up element so as to detect any unevenness of a surface of an object being imaged by the image pick up element. In this system, there is provided a plurality of buffers for performing data read-out and data write-in in parallel when the luminance level of each pixel is converted into a raster image.

However, nowhere is the Forslund '338 patent understood to disclose or suggest that these buffers are used as a buffer in common, both in an image display operation and in an image recording operation, that is, used to serve both as a display buffer and as a recording buffer, as disclosed in claim in the present application. As noted above, the Forslund '338 patent detects a feature/characteristic (unevenness) of the surface of an object based on a change in the luminance level of each pixel of a pick-up image of the object surface. The Forslund '338 patent is not understood to teach the feature of picking up a plurality of images of the object with a plurality of image pick up means, respectively, so as to synthesize and record the plurality of images thus picked up (3-D imaging), as disclosed in claim in the present application.

For the above reasons, Applicants submit that independent Claim 1 is allowable over the cited art.

Claims 2 to 7 depend from Claim 1, and are believed allowable for the same reasons. Moreover, each of these dependent claims recites additional features in

combination with the features of independent base Claim 1, and is believed allowable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims respectfully is requested.

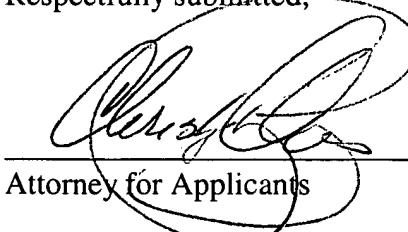
Newly presented Claims 25 to 31 have been added to provide Applicants with an additional scope of protection commensurate with the disclosure. No new matter has been added.

In this regard, newly present independent Claim 25 recites in method format features similar to those structural features recited in independent Claim 1, and is believed allowable for the same reasons. Claims 26 to 31 depend from Claim 25, recite features that parallel the features of dependent Claims 2 to 7, and are believed allowable for the same reasons as well.

Applicants believe that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action, and submit that the application is in allowable form. Favorable consideration of the claims and passage to issue of the present application at the Examiner's earliest convenience earnestly are solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A camera comprising:

a plurality of image pickup means for picking up a plurality of images of an object, respectively [an image];

display means for displaying images [an image] picked up by said plurality of [the] image pickup means; and

a plurality of memory means for use [being used] both as a display buffer for [memory in] displaying the images [image] picked up by said plurality of image pickup means, and as a recording buffer [memory] for recording the images picked up [image acquired] by said plurality of image pickup means.

2. (Amended) A camera according to claim 1, wherein when said plurality of memory means are used [in] for displaying [the] an image picked up by said plurality of image pickup means, some of said plurality of memory means are used for a write operation and the others of said plurality of memory means are used for a read operation by switching between the write and read operations, whereby said plurality of memory means are used as a double buffer.

3. (Amended) A camera according to claim 1, wherein when said plurality of memory means are used for recording an [the] image picked up by said plurality of image pickup means, all of said plurality of said memory means are used for write operation in order to record

each image picked up [acquired] by said plurality of image pickup means, and after [said] the write operation is completed, all of said plurality of memory means are used for read operation.

4. (Amended) A camera according to claim 2, wherein the image is written in said double buffer in normal form and the image is read out from said double buffer in inverted form.

5. (Amended) A camera according to claim 2, wherein the image is written in said double buffer in inverted form and the image is read out from said double buffer in normal form.

6. (Amended) A camera according to claim 3, wherein the image is recorded in normal form when all of said plurality of memory means are used for write operation, and the image is read out in inverted form from all of said plurality of memory means after the recording is completed.

7. (Amended) A camera according to claim 3, wherein the image is recorded in inverted form when all of said plurality of memory means are used for write operation, and the image is read out in normal form from all of said plurality of memory means after the recording is completed.